

Dot-EDU/Guatemala

Quarterly Report

July 2003 through September 2003

**Using Information Communication Technology Applications to
Support Intercultural Bilingual Education
In the Department of El Quiché, Guatemala**

Leader Award No. GDG-A-00-01-00011-00

Associate Cooperative Agreement No. 520-A-00-02-00109-00

I. Introduction

This quarter continued to be full of technical activities, with progress being made in all results. By the beginning of the quarter, all of the technology centers were finally fully equipped and functional, allowing a shift of effort towards helping the students and teachers make good pedagogical use of the resources now at their disposal. Much training was provided and 37 teachers advanced in projects to create their own teaching materials as class projects. Skill levels went up dramatically (from zero in many cases), but much more training and assistance is needed. Materials creation projects with partner institutions are advancing on schedule and generating much excitement among all involved. More and more content has been added to the web portal and it is being used more regularly. The project has begun a process to formalize an inter-institutional committee to manage the portal and strengthen the virtual community. As a sustainability strategy, the project and local partners have begun the creation of a local NGO to carry on the work begun under the current activity and move into new areas. Despite the short life of the activity, all results are expected to be met, although some processes, such as materials creation, are being pushed more than desired by the project to ensure completion.

II. Major Accomplishments

Result #1.1: Opening of seven new technology centers

- ***Mini-centers in rural primary schools:*** These centers, known as CETEBITOs, are now completely operational. Because of the rough roads and poor condition of some of the donated equipment, there have been many technical problems. Nonetheless, technical staff have nearly all of the machines up and running software from the first phase of Enlace (Let's Broaden our Thinking and Illustrating our Words) as well as a beta version of the interactive teaching posters (Jun E'). It is important to note the heavy involvement of parents' groups in these centers and their deep gratitude for having this opportunity in their villages.

- ***Cost-benefit analysis of receiving donated computers from World Computer Exchange (WCE):*** Project staff completed a simple cost-benefit analysis of bringing in donated computers from WCE. In the case of the current agreement, it was the best way to get a lot of computers to a lot of schools. It was feasible since Enlace has the internal expertise to be able to upgrade and support these computers. In the project director's opinion, for rural primary schools that cannot invest more than a minimal amount, these computers are a good option as long as heavy support is provided. However, a major limitation is lack of availability of parts, since new parts are often incompatible with older model computers. For high schools with a more sophisticated user base and more possibilities for self-financing, other options for providing newer equipment should also be considered.

Result #1.2: Technical assistance to technology centers:

- ***Workshops in Internet use:*** Now that all centers have Internet, basic Internet training was provided in each school to a total of 150 teachers, many of whom were using a computer for the first time. The workshop included the basics of e-mail and searching for information, including a tour of the www.ebiguatemala.org web portal. While much follow-up is still needed, participants expressed satisfaction at having access from their rural communities to “the largest library in the world.” This training was taken further in two workshops, led by Gabriela Alpírez, on the use of Internet as a didactic resource. The first was with a group of 24 teachers in courses such as pedagogy and didactics. The second day was with a group of 9 Mayan language teachers. In each course, participants learned more about how to use Internet to find information, how to evaluate web pages, and how to develop lesson plans that incorporate Internet. Teachers came to the course with a fair level of basic computer and Internet skills and left with a new excitement about all that Internet holds for them and some tools to be able to incorporate it into their teaching.
- ***Workshop in video editing:*** Despite its complexity, many centers have shown tremendous interest in filming and editing their own videos. A two-day workshop was presented to two representatives from each center, during which participants learned the whole process. Participants expressed feeling fully prepared to create their own video materials using the equipment they have available to them. As of this writing, it is not clear how much has been put into practice. Nonetheless, the interest indicates that this is a medium that could be exploited in the future.
- ***Training through New Horizons (Microsoft donation):*** The first phase of the Microsoft/New Horizons training finished. The 75 participants were very happy and thankful to Microsoft for the 14 weekend courses they received, including Windows, Word, PowerPoint and Train the Trainer. More importantly, they learned the material well. They have even adopted the technical language used by the New Horizons trainers. Cynthia Castillo was pleasantly surprised to hear a teacher from Santa María Ixtahuacán in the final course (Train the Trainer) speaking of the Window properties, sub-menus, commands, etc. She was impressed by his use of the correct nomenclature. Staff interviewed some of the participants and also staff from New Horizons and Microsoft and have some video clips that describe both the satisfactions and some of the challenges. In November, there will be an advanced round of courses for the center administrators

during 16 days, 8 hours a day. There will also be an intensive course for the teachers in schools with CETEBITOS.

- ***Materials creation projects:*** Enlace staff offered teachers in each center the opportunity to create teaching materials (nominally, bilingual intercultural) as class projects with help from Enlace. Despite some attrition, 37 teachers have finished or nearly-finished projects. The materials include Mayan language reading material (poems, stories, and songs.) There is also information about medicinal plants, Mayan language word search puzzles, Mayan calendar information, and much more. These materials will be incorporated into one or more CD-ROMs for distribution to all participating schools. They will also be distributed via the web portal.
- ***Technical and administrative support to centers:*** Project technical staff continue to offer support to center administrators to resolve problems such as virus, hardware problems, network problems, software installation, purchases of supplies. The project is working to reduce dependence of the centers on Enlace.
- ***Rubrics for evaluating centers:*** Project staff have developed a rubric for evaluating how well a given center responds to the CETEBI model. It includes many factors in the bilingual education, administrative, and technical areas. Another rubric is being applied to measure how well each administrator lives up to the desired profile of a CETEBI administrator. This information will be important to help each center strengthen itself and for the Enlace final report.

Result #2.1: Revision, distribution, and application of LearnLink materials:

- ***Installation of Enlace software in centers:*** Enlace technical staff have made a special point of ensuring that software produced in the first phase is installed in the centers and that students, teachers, and administrators are aware of its availability. It has been noted that many students are now using clip-art from the “Illustrating our Word” CD-ROM.

Result 2.2: Creation of materials in partnership with other local organizations:

- ***Near-finalization of materials creation projects with partners:*** These projects have remained on track. Usability testing has been carried out by project staff thanks to the training provided by Helga Perez in June and corrections have been made. Final versions of all of the materials are expected to be in the hands of USAID by September 30 for their review. Plans for reproduction are being made, so that the materials can be presented and distributed as scheduled in a major event on October 23 . The only material that will not be completed as planned is the Ixil literacy CD (one of five being developed by the Mayan Languages Academy.) Due to lack of time or lack of interest, the Ixil community could not meet the required deadlines, despite much follow-up by the project. The project has offered continued support to the Ixils to finish the project at a later date.

Result #3.1: Creation of a bilingual education virtual community:

- ***Virtual community:*** Enlace is forming an inter-institutional coalition to manage the ebiguatemala.org web portal. Response was favorable and the coalition will apparently be formed by 8 organizations, including Enlace Quiché, Ministry of Education, Mayan Languages Academy, Mayan Education Council, OKMA, PROMEM/UNESCO,

FODIGUA, and the Francisco Marroquin Linguistics Project. The short-term goals are to write and begin to carry out a strategic plan to maintain and build the virtual community.

- ***New content for the web portal:*** Many new materials have been uploaded to the portal. These include teaching modules developed by EDUMAYA, K'iche' songs recorded by PAEBI, a linguistic atlas, and an extensive presentation of statistics compiled by MEDIR.

Result #3.2: Capacity-development in Quiché and neighboring regions:

- ***Creation of a local NGO:*** While not originally planned for, Enlace staff and key local partners have chosen to form a NGO based in Quiché to further the work begun under USAID-funding. The "Asociacion Ajb'atz' Enlace Quiché" has thirteen founding members. Ajb'atz' refers both to the first day of the Mayan calendar and to the weavers that weave threads together, much as ICTs weave information together. Work on the bylaws is moving forward, and the organization should be fully legalized by October.
- ***WorldLinks:*** Adriana Vilela, Latin America Regional Coordinator for WorldLinks, visited Guatemala from September 7 – 8 to begin organizing WorldLinks work in Guatemala thanks to \$140,000 from ICDF (Taiwan). Andy (project director) accompanied her to meet with USAID, Education Ministry, visit schools, etc. WorldLinks would like to provide training to the teachers where Enlace has opened centers. Since USAID funding is running out, it is likely that WorldLinks will work directly with the Enlace Quiché NGO. This training will build on what Enlace has begun on the use of Internet as an integral part of the curriculum, especially in inter-school collaborative projects.
- ***Microsoft:*** Microsoft has expressed satisfaction with the investment they made in training 75 teachers, students, and administrators during 2003. They would like to continue supporting Enlace Quiché during 2004 with possible donations of cash, software, and training. Enlace Quiché is following up this possibility since it will provide important resources to increase human capacity in the centers.

Result #3.3: Dialog with MOE and others to expand the use of ICTs and their integration into the educational system:

- ***Ministry of Education video featuring Enlace Quiché:*** Entirely on their own initiative and at their own expense, the Ministry of Education filmed and produced a one-hour video about Educational Technology, that features the Enlace Quiché project. This video shows the process used to create teaching materials as school projects using the technology centers. It is part of a series of videos being produced for the national in-service teacher training program.
- ***Ambassador's visit:*** The U.S. Ambassador, John Hamilton, visited the Santa Cruz del Quiché Bilingual Intercultural Teacher-Training school on Monday, September 22. He was accompanied by USAID Mission director, Glenn Anders, and Education Team members, Julia Richards and Celso Chaclan. He first saw part of the new MOE video about Educational Technology that highlights the Enlace Quiché project. Then, students and teachers showed him the K'iche' language teaching materials they are creating in the technology center. He and the other attendees asked questions about the center and materials. All involved expressed satisfaction with the visit.

- **Enlace Quiché materials at the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS):** Two Enlace products were nominated to represent Guatemala in the WSIS awards this December in Geneva. The web portal was proposed as the best e-content and creativity example in Category e-Inclusion from Guatemala and the CD-ROM **Let's Broaden Our Thinking** was proposed as the best e-content and creativity example in Category e-Culture from Guatemala.
- **IDB Conference:** The local project director was asked to present at an IDB conference on the Plan Puebla Panamá in September. His presentation discussed how the lessons learned from Enlace Quiché could be applied to the IDB's digital initiatives in the region.

Result #4 (internal): A well-administered project:

- **Team-building efforts:** As a consequence of the mid-project M&E visit, the project staff detected some internal problems in teamwork. The project held a one-day workshop on team-building and intra-team communication with an outside facilitator. In a follow-up meeting, the air was cleared on some issues and changes were made in the staff meeting structures to strengthen communication and allow for better coordination and cooperation in carrying out technical activities.

Monitoring and evaluation:

- **Report from mid-project visit:** NetAssessment's mid-project visit report arrived more than three months after the actual visit. The report provides important insight into the project and suggests changes that could increase the project's impact. Even before receiving the report, Enlace staff had implemented many of the recommendations, based on the final session with NetAssessment.
- **Use of video for documenting project impact:** NetAssessment's visit served as a catalyst to project staff for the use of digital video for documenting project impact. Staff have begun to film clips of partners and beneficiaries in different events. These clips are being incorporated into presentations.

III. Challenges

- The late installation of the centers and low skill levels of the teachers has limited the amount of integration of technology into the educational process. While much interest and vision has been generated, it is not clear how prepared and willing teachers are to repeat such projects next year without the help of a project such as Enlace.
- Problems with donated equipment and difficulty in finding parts will put a heavy burden on the center administrators to keep the computers running next year.
- Late delivery of the M&E report from NetAssessment's visit in late May hindered project planning activities.

IV. Travel

| Staff/consultants | Objective | Dates | Destination |
|-------------------|--|------------|-------------|
| Mario Torres | Participate in "Next 5 Minutes Festival" (invited by organizers) | Sep. 11-14 | Amsterdam |

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| Andy Lieberman | participate in USAID/EGAT conference, project planning | Aug. 5-15 | Washington, D.C. |
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V. Key Activities Planned for Next Quarter

- Legalization of the Enlace Quiché NGO and development of a strategic plan
- Materials presentation event on October 23
- Closeout of all technical activities and beginning of closeout of administrative activities
- Final STTA from EDC (Daniel Light) and AED (Kelly Morphy)
- Final M&E visit from Sergio Cambronero